

Introducing
the new terminology of
ISLAMICJERUSALEM
and its field of inquiry

البروفيسور الدكتور
عبد الفتاح محمد الغويلى المقدسى

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عبد الفتاح محمد الغويلى المقدسى

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Preface

As an essential part of introducing the field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies to Malaysia, in particular, and Southeast Asia, in general, it is important to be clear first on what is meant by this new terminology. A working definition therefore needs to be established. The objective of this monograph is namely to introduce the new terminology of Islamicjerusalem and its field of inquiry to Malaysia, in particular, and Southeast Asia, in general.

To introduce the new definitions of Islamicjerusalem and Islamicjerusalem Studies, this monograph discusses the background of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies since 1994, and also highlights some of the latest research and developments in Islamicjerusalem Studies.

It is hoped that it will enrich the understanding of this inimitable region in West Asia, address some of the sensitive, important and key issues on the subject, as well as open up and promote intellectual and academic debate and understanding of Islamicjerusalem and its role widely enough to shed light on new lines of explanation, interpretation, and understanding.

Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi

Ankara – TURKEY: 13 April 2018

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Introduction

As an essential part of introducing the field of inquiry of Islamic Jerusalem Studies, it is important to be clear first on what is meant by this new terminology. A working definition therefore needs to be established. Here, a number of questions need to be raised. Is Islamic Jerusalem the same as Jerusalem, the city? What sort of Jerusalem are we talking about? Is it simply the area of al-Aqsa Mosque? (144,000 m² - this is only one-sixth of the Old Walled City). Is it the Old Walled City (868,000 m²), East Jerusalem, West Jerusalem, Greater Jerusalem, the whole of Palestine or part of Palestine? All these are the questions that need to be answered for a definition from a contemporary context. It is important however to link this to historical, geographical, religious and geopolitical contexts for a definition to be produced.

Accordingly, it should be noted that this monograph is not a study of the history or politics of Islamic Jerusalem, but a serious and scholarly attempt to introduce Islamic Jerusalem and its intellectually exciting and stimulating new field of inquiry of Islamic Jerusalem Studies. The aim is to give a better understanding of this new term and set the scene for advanced research. In other words, the objective of this monograph is namely to introduce the new terminology of Islamic Jerusalem and its field of inquiry.

As this monograph has been written for scholars and the wider public who are interested in understanding Islamic Jerusalem and its new field of inquiry, it is also hoped that it will enrich the understanding of this inimitable region, address some of the sensitive, important and key issues on the subject as well as open up and promote intellectual and academic debate and understanding of Islamic Jerusalem and its role widely enough to shed light on new lines of explanation, interpretation and understanding.

However, this new terminology may be seen as provocative and challenging for those in academic, religious and political establishments who are interested in the region and who may not accept the term on the basis that it goes beyond their political and religious agenda and attachments, or for those who cannot go along with innovation and

new ideas. Indeed, if you have a political agenda, it will be difficult to adopt a neutral approach in the case of Islamicjerusalem, where the competing claims of the adherents of the three world religions and the international interest meet and sometimes clash. Accordingly, the author, for a long time, has been adamant that 'the political agenda and its activisms and scholarship are separate'. He argues very strongly that 'political movements, religious or secular in any country in the world (including Western countries), restrict the intellectual development of scholars and impose restrictions on their freedom of thought' in some issues, such as Islamicjerusalem. He (2007:3) also argues, 'To be taken seriously, any academic agenda should be taken away from religious or political agenda'.

Method

The author adopted interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches in this research. In addition, he did not embark on his research with set definition(s). Instead, his findings/results emerged over the course of his examination and analysis of the data collected systematically throughout the process of this research, in particular on the first Muslim *Fatih* of Islamicjerusalem and Umar's *Aman* to the people of Aelia.

Some available English translations suffered from the translators not understanding the original Arabic texts. When translating terminologies from Arabic into English, an attempt was made by the author to strike a balance between the strength of expression in the original and its exact meaning. However, to avoid the mistranslating of any particular Arabic terminologies, the author employed an approach of not translating these into English but leaving them in the original Arabic language and giving his own understanding of the term. This should help to avoid any ambiguities stemming from different or vague understandings and interpretations.

The main source of data for this research is from the author's personal archives as a Professor of International Relations historian as well as the founder of the field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem

Studies. As the founder, the author has been actively involved in the development of the field from the first day of its inception in London in 1994. Indeed, this monograph was developed from the author's long and in-depth involvement in Islamicjerusalem Studies, which has been a great advantage for this author in conducting this research. In short, his main tools were his continuous observations, monitoring and deep involvement.

Finally, to introduce this new terminology and its field of inquiry, this monograph discusses in chapter one the background of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies since 1994. Chapter two presents the two new definitions: Islamicjerusalem and Islamicjerusalem Studies. Chapters three and five highlight some of the latest progressive research and developments in Islamicjerusalem Studies.

May Allah guide us to the straight path and accept our good deeds.

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Chapter 1

Historical Background 1994-2007¹

The establishment of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem was a process and a journey that took nearly a decade, 1994-2003, adopting the principle of gradual development and travelling through several stages. It also went through a number of stages on the road to its establishment through an integrated programme, which included a number of new academic initiatives and practical steps, comprising both the developing institutional framework and the modes of delivery of the new field in the UK.

As part of his vision for the new field, the founder (author) paid particular attention to establishing the concept of Islamicjerusalem Studies in the building of its foundations and to develop a new frame of reference for its study. From the initial stages, he was keen to provide practical steps to deliver the essential contributions of knowledge in the new field to the world of learning and to encourage young researchers to specialise in this field. These have been delivered mainly through organising an annual international academic conference on Islamicjerusalem Studies (17 to date), the *Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies* (17 volumes to date; and now in three languages: English, Arabic and Turkish) and the securing of a good number of postgraduate research studentships in Islamicjerusalem Studies.

These elements have been very significant in creating the new frame of reference for the study of Islamicjerusalem. Indeed, both the annual conference and the *Journal* have successfully 'highlighted

the gap in the available literature' on Islamicjerusalem Studies, provided the 'necessary knowledge' to develop the field and become an international discussion forum for scholars who are interested in the field (Al-Ahlas, 2004: 35). In its initial and crucial stage of development, the Academy for Islamicjerusalem Studies (ISRA) also successfully secured funding for young students to pursue Islamicjerusalem Studies at postgraduate level at a number of Scottish universities.

In addition, other serious practical steps were needed to institutionalise the development, integration and promotion of the field. These were initiated by developing the first new course entitled 'Islamicjerusalem', which the author taught at the undergraduate level at the University of Stirling, Scotland, and before that, in Arabic at the Al-Quds University, where he taught that course in Al-Aqsa Mosque itself for three years between 1990 and 1992.

This first course has been developed into a taught Master's programme at Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies since its inception in Dundee in 2001 and is an accredited degree from the University of Abertay Dundee and later Aberdeen University in the UK. Indeed, to pioneer the field, the Institute embodied the founder's vision by inaugurating the first and unique taught Master's programme in Islamicjerusalem Studies worldwide. After the establishment of the Institute came the creation of its first academic post, the chair in Islamicjerusalem Studies. The Centre for Islamicjerusalem Studies was founded to focus all its efforts on and to play a key role in developing the new field.

This was a natural and progressive development aimed at structuring the research and teaching of Islamicjerusalem Studies in the UK. Al-Ahlas (2004:80) argues that the 'main reason behind the success' of establishing the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies is the 'uniquely close relationship between the two elements, knowledge and power'. This formal model of relationship between ruler and scholar is absent in Arab and Muslim countries. Indeed, as stated in the *Dundee Declaration for the Future Development of the Study of Islam and Muslims* on 18 March 2004, one of 'the crises in the contemporary Muslim world is the absence of cooperation between knowledge and power'.

Chapter 2

Definitions

After the initial research on Umar's *Aman* Assurance of Safety to the people of Aelia (El-Awaisi, 2000), the author started from 2000 to develop his new findings. In 2004, this helped to define both Islamicjerusalem and Islamicjerusalem Studies. Indeed, Umar's *Aman* was the jewel of the first Muslim *Fatih* (i.e., introducing new stage and vision) of Aelia and the beacon for developing Islamicjerusalem's unique and creative vision and nature.

Islamicjerusalem

Al-Ahlas (2004: 32) argues that the fifth international academic conference on Islamicjerusalem Studies held on 21 April 2003, is 'a turning point' in the history of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies. Although he was the one who in 1994 created this new terminology of Islamicjerusalem, a coherent definition was not possible when the author tried, especially in the years from 2000 to 2005, to come to an understanding of what he specifically meant by Islamicjerusalem. This is due to the complex nature of the concept.

On 21 April 2003, in the fifth international academic conference on Islamicjerusalem, 'Islamicjerusalem: Prophetic Temples and al-Aqsa Mosque Demystifying Realities and Exploring Identities', the author presented a keynote speech on 'Exploring the Identity of

Islamicjerusalem'. Here, he publicly admitted that, 'It took me nearly three years (2000 – 2003) to come to the working definition which I would like to present to you today'. He added, 'We need to start with a working definition. So, what do we mean by Islamicjerusalem? ...'.

Although the author did not at that time (2003) present his final definition of Islamicjerusalem, his presentation contained its three key elements. For the first time, he argued that Islamicjerusalem is not a mere city or another urban settlement, but a region which includes several cities, towns and villages. From this working definition, it can be seen that Islamicjerusalem is best described as a region with three key interlinked elements. He also made the same point when he presented his public lecture at the Academy of Islamic Studies at the University of Malaya (UM) on 24 September 2004. However, what is presented here is the revised definition of this new terminology² of Islamicjerusalem, which takes into consideration the discussions the author has had since then, the new definition of Islamicjerusalem Studies and the latest progressive research and developments in the field .

Islamicjerusalem (one word) is a new terminology for a new concept, which may be translated into the Arabic language as *Bayt al-Maqdis*. It can be fairly and eventually characterised and defined as a unique region laden with a rich historical background, religious significances, cultural attachments, competing political and religious claims, international interests and various aspects that affect the rest of the world in historical, contemporary and future contexts. It has a central frame of reference and a vital nature with three principal intertwined elements: its geographical location (land and boundaries); its people (population); and its unique and creative inclusive vision, to administer that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism, cultural engagement and *Aman* (peaceful co-existence and mutual respect).

Islamicjerusalem can thus be described as a region with three key interlinked elements. Its geographical location (land); its people (i.e., who live or used to live there); and its vision to administer or to rule that land and its people. It is not possible to separate these three

elements as they are interlinked. In addition, they are linked to their historical context (for the author, if geography is the theatre, history is the play). The last part of the definition is partly borrowed from the political science theory of the three elements of any state but the concept of sovereignty is replaced by the vision of inclusivity and plurality of Islamicjerusalem.

Indeed, this 'unique creative vision' of Islamicjerusalem is considered more important than the issue of sovereignty in the case of Islamicjerusalem. It could be argued that the final product is normally the issue of sovereignty. However, the agenda for Islamicjerusalem is not the desire to achieve colonialist and imperialist goals of occupying lands and people which could be based either on economic ambitions or on racist, nationalist and theological claims. If there is no vision, or a vision of exclusivity, in Islamicjerusalem, this would naturally lead internally to injustice, oppression and divisions in its multicultural society. Such a repressive regime would work hard to subvert the wishes and aspirations of the people under its rule. It would mean the involvement of external powers to try to resolve these internal troubles and problems, leading to instability and barriers to the steady progress and prosperity of the region. Indeed, the unique aspect of Islamicjerusalem is highlighted through its vision, which presents a model for *Aman* (peaceful co-existence and mutual respect) and a way for people of different religious and cultural backgrounds to live together in an environment of diversity, multiculturalism and cultural engagement. This understanding of Islamicjerusalem was presented by the author, for the first time, in his public lecture on 'Islamicjerusalem as a Model for Multiculturalism' at the Academy of Islamic Studies at UM on 24 September 2004. Subsequently, this led him to write a number of developing articles on the topic based on the findings of his research on Umar's *Aman* Assurance in 2000.

The definition also argues that Islamicjerusalem is not a mere city or another urban settlement, but a region which includes several cities and villages. Identifying the centre of the centre of the *Barakah* led him to develop a new theory for geopolitics, 'the *Barakah* Circles Theory of Islamicjerusalem'. This theory is based on new interpretations of the core Muslim sources and history.

The Origin of the Term

The Arabic term, *Bayt al-Maqdis*, has been used in the past in both core and early Muslim narratives and sources to refer to the Aelia region (Al-Tel: 2003: 291). It may be claimed that Prophet Muhammad was the first to use the term *Bayt al-Maqdis* to refer to that region. Indeed, he used both terms: Aelia and *Bayt al-Maqdis*, in many of his traditions but Prophet Muhammad did not use even once the word “*Quds*”. However, one can argue that the Arabs, before the advent of Islam, may also have used the term, *Bayt al-Maqdis*, to refer to the same region. Although the Prophet did use *Bayt al-Maqdis*, the author cannot be certain when the term was first used.

It is worth mentioning that since its launch in the winter of 1997, the *Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies* has also carried the Arabic term, *Al-Quds al-Islamiyyah* or Islamic Quds. However, the author’s new findings on Umar’s *Aman* Assurance of Safety to the people of Aelia have led to a change in the use of that Arabic term. The change was reflected in the Arabic title of the *Journal* from *Al-Quds al-Islamiyyah* to *Bayt al-Maqdis* in the summer issue of 2000. This was the same issue of the *Journal* which published the author’s article on Umar’s *Aman* in both the English and Arabic languages.

Moreover, the terminology of Islamicjerusalem (one word) as a new concept appeared and was used in its comprehensive sense for the first time originally in the English language by this author, as is documented, characterised and defined in this monograph. It should be noted that Islamicjerusalem is one word and not two separate words, i.e., Islamic and Jerusalem. It should also be made clear that Islamicjerusalem is not the same as Jerusalem or Islamic Quds *al-Quds al-Islamiyyah*. It is also different from Muslim Jerusalem as in Jewish Jerusalem and Christian Jerusalem. The historical period when the Muslims ruled Islamicjerusalem for several centuries should be called Muslim Jerusalem and not Islamicjerusalem. Islamicjerusalem is a new concept, whereas Muslim Jerusalem refers to the periods when Muslims ruled Islamicjerusalem. To illustrate this point, Umar Ibn al-Khattab’s *Fatih* of the region is the first Muslim *Fatih* of

Islamicjerusalem. Indeed, this should also apply to the later Muslim period up to 1917 and to any Muslim rule of Islamicjerusalem in the future. In addition, contemporary Muslim Jerusalem is shaped in part by dialogue with the concept of Islamicjerusalem, the classical and modern history of Muslims and in part, by response to external interests, influences and occupation of the region. Accordingly, contemporary Muslims seek to relate their heritage in Muslim Jerusalem to the concept of Islamicjerusalem and the Muslim past to the radical situation of today.

It must also be noted that this term, Islamicjerusalem (one or two words), has been used widely by scholars since 1994, and has now established and created its modest legacy. To support this argument, one could say that the term became the norm by which degrees were awarded, institutions and foundations established and books printed. It was, for example, used in the subsequent titles of the International Academic Conferences on Islamicjerusalem Studies (17 to date) which attracted prominent international speakers from the Western and Muslim worlds. It was used in the title of the refereed Journal, *Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies*, as well as prizes and awards; and in Master's and PhD degrees initially awarded by the University of Abertay Dundee (Islamic Jerusalem Studies - two separate words) and then, the University of Aberdeen in the UK (Islamicjerusalem Studies - one word); and currently by UUM (one word). In 2012, the University of North Malaysia (UUM) established the "Institute of Excellence for Islamicjerusalem Studies".

Many academics who attended the Islamicjerusalem annual international academic conference and published articles, have used this term. One example of a scholar who published with the term as one word is Ghazarian of Oxford University on the *Armenians of Islamicjerusalem*. This has also now been adopted by several academic publishers and refereed journals that have published books and articles using this term in its new form as a single word. Some national and international academics have accepted this new terminology and adopted it in their articles in some internationally referred journals, such as the *American Journal of Islamic Social Scientists*. In addition, publishers, such as Sophia University Press and Cambridge Scholars

Publishing, have adopted the term in their publications. In addition, the term has been used as two separate words by various renowned scholars from different disciplines, such as Armstrong (1997), Grabar (1996), Walls (1990) and Aist (2009), amongst others.

In the recent past and during the establishment of the new field in the UK, a number of scholars were concerned with the reception of this new terminology, especially linking the term 'Islamic' with Jerusalem. Their main concern was that the use of this term, in particular, the word 'Islamic', could open up hostility and non-acceptance by some Orientalists and Israeli academics. At that time, the author's main counter-argument was that, without the word, Islamic, the whole terminology would lose its niche, meaning and definition. In addition, if it were to be only Jerusalem without the word, Islamic, which Jerusalem would we be talking about? Moreover, there were already several teaching programmes and research in Jerusalem Studies which meant that the contribution to knowledge would be very limited. However, Islamicjerusalem opened up a new area of specialisation with a new frame of reference.

In addition, the use of the word, Jerusalem, does not represent the definition which is presented in this chapter. This is especially true since it has become obvious that Islamicjerusalem is a new concept which carries historical, geographical, geopolitical, religious, cultural and political backgrounds and contexts. In addition, it is not only al-Aqsa Mosque nor the Walled City, as some out-dated arguments might suggest. Indeed, it is not just a city nor yet another urban settlement, but a region which includes several villages, towns and cities, which has an inclusive multicultural vision. In short, the new terminology of Islamicjerusalem cannot be understood without placing it in historical, geographical, geopolitical and religious contexts.

After examining all of the different terms (Bayt al-Maqdis, Holy Land, Aelia, Muslim Jerusalem and *Quds*) by the scholars, experts and specialists in the field of Islamicjerusalem Studies for nearly a decade (2000-2009), it has been found by consensus that none has the same potential in representing the field and providing a better alternative to Islamicjerusalem *in English*. There have been

various attempts to change this term in English; the alternative terms presented mainly rotate around two terminologies: '*Bayt al-Maqdis*' and '*Jerusalem/Quds*'. Neither of these terms represents the field well: the first alienates the English-speaking world which is unfamiliar with this terminology and the latter does not reflect the new findings of the research conducted to develop the field. However, within the non-English speaking world, one can use the term, *Bayt al-Maqdis* (in Arabic), *Baitulmaqdis* (in Malay and Indonesian) and *Beytülmaqdis* (in Turkish).

In short, within the English-speaking world, the term, *Islamicjerusalem*, as one word, seems to be the most appropriate term which was originally developed in the English language and represents the concept best, even with its problems. Indeed, the use of the word '*Islamic*' in the English terminology, *Islamicjerusalem*, in the West is the right word to shock, confuse and throw doubt on some of what has been taken for granted in the past by scholars representing various schools of thought, trends and approaches. It also covers new ground, addresses some of the sensitive key issues, opens up and promotes constructive dialogue, initiates intellectual and academic debates that should shed light on new lines of explanation and new horizons of critical thinking and enriches the understanding of this inimitable region. Indeed, to advance such knowledge and promote serious and constructive dialogue, is to challenge long-established Orientalist claims.

Islamicjerusalem Studies

The sixth international academic conference on *Islamicjerusalem Studies* organised on 31 May 2004, which celebrated the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the new field of inquiry of *Islamicjerusalem Studies*, was another significant event in the history of the new field. In his keynote speech, the founder presented for the first time his definition of *Islamicjerusalem Studies*. However, what is presented here is the revised definition of *Islamicjerusalem Studies*,

which has taken into consideration more recent discussions, the new definition of Islamicjerusalem and the latest progressive research in the field and developments.

Islamicjerusalem Studies can be fairly and eventually characterised and defined as a new branch of human knowledge based on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. It aims to investigate all matters related to the Islamicjerusalem region, explore and examine its various aspects and provide a critical analytic understanding of the new frame of reference in order to identify the nature of Islamicjerusalem and to understand the geopolitical uniqueness of this region and its effects on the rest of the world in both historical, contemporary and future contexts.

Islamicjerusalem Studies is a field of inquiry which covers several disciplines, such as international relations, history and archaeology, art and architecture, geography and geology, environment and politics, the study of Islam and Muslims and other related disciplines. Accordingly, research conducted in the field combine interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches which include historical and theological, theoretical and conceptual, empirical and cultural approaches. This field also adopts the policy of escaping the trap of reacting to others and trying to engage with them by creating a new agenda, dialogue and debate on the subject, which will lead to more constructive dialogue between scholars in several disciplines.

This field not only provides an understanding of Islamicjerusalem but examines the new frame of reference within which Muslims understand Islamicjerusalem. Several questions are key to addressing this point: What are the reasons for Muslims having close links to and concern with Islamicjerusalem? What is the significance of Islamicjerusalem to Islam and to Muslims? Does Islamicjerusalem have any special status and position in Islam compared to any other region?

In-depth discussion of the various aspects and dimensions of Islamicjerusalem opens up new horizons for those interested in understanding its vision, nature and the reasons for its distinctness from other regions. For example, the study of the inclusive vision of Islamicjerusalem should not only be restricted to its people's religions

and cultures; it should also include 'equal measures' of the roles of its two genders, male and female. A young Egyptian postgraduate student, Hassan (2005: 69), argues that:

Women as much as men left their marks in the beginning of the Muslim history of, and the physical attachment to, IslamicJerusalem, and both genders played a role in asserting its inclusiveness to religions and genders. [Only] when this crucial element of inclusiveness is sufficiently taken into account, can IslamicJerusalem become a model for 'multiculturalism' in practice.

As 'gender' has become 'a useful category of historical analysing' (Scott, 1999: 28-50), the author agrees with Hassan's argument (2005: 2-3), that 'the usage of gender as a tool for analysing both its (IslamicJerusalem) past and present is a necessity for the completion and advancement of this new field of inquiry (of IslamicJerusalem Studies)'.

In order to demonstrate this inclusive vision, there is a need to use gender as an analytical tool for approaching the study of IslamicJerusalem by examining the active role played by Muslim women and their vital contributions in underpinning and demonstrating the significance of IslamicJerusalem. This calls for a re-examination of the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses, the *Ahadith*, that were narrated and the Muslim juristic rulings that were made by Muslim women, and compare them to those made by Muslim men regarding IslamicJerusalem. In addition, Muslim women's participation should be analysed and their role reinstated in the making of IslamicJerusalem history in all its periods. For example, Hassan (2005: 45) claims of the Mother of Believers, Safiyyah Bint Huyayyi Ibn Akhtab, that her 'life story, in general, and her visit to IslamicJerusalem, in particular, illustrate vividly, how the whole process of negotiating her Jewish background and her Muslim religion culminates in IslamicJerusalem'. In her conclusion, Hassan (2005: 69) presented her dissertation as 'merely the cornerstone for a whole range of possible further gender studies on IslamicJerusalem. The interdisciplinary

and multidisciplinary approaches that characterise Islamicjerusalem Studies must be utilised in further discussions and examinations of gender in Islamicjerusalem’.

In addition, it could be argued that this field consolidates the Qur’anic, *Hadith* and Muslim historical disciplines by shedding light on new lines of explanation, interpretation and understanding. Numerous verses about Islamicjerusalem in the Qur’an, and the frequency with which the Prophet spoke about Islamicjerusalem (El-Awaisi, 1998: 49), lead one to argue that this field of Islamicjerusalem Studies has revealed greater insights in several disciplines, such as the interpretation of the Qur’an and the *Ahadith*. In addition, it clarifies several contradicting historical events and resolves a number of problematic historical issues (Al-Tel: 2003).

Finally, one could argue that a definition should be short and succinct; yet, these definitions of Islamicjerusalem are very long. However, what has been provided here is a scholarly presentation of what can be fairly and eventually characterised and defined as Islamicjerusalem and its field. So, the definition is not just the definition but also the characteristics of these definitions. Such definitions also aim to raise questions and provide researchers and scholars in the field with the key aspects of Islamicjerusalem.

Although these definitions are the author’s most important contributions to the field, they should be considered as working definitions, to set the scene for the field’s future development. They are by no means theological or divine *Ilahiyyat* definitions which cannot be changed or developed, as some would claim. They are, as in the case of Islamicjerusalem Studies, characterised and defined as a new ‘branch of human knowledge’. Indeed, there are human explanations, interpretations and understanding of new concepts and terminology which are continually subject to change and development based on the latest research in the field by scholars, experts and specialists in the field of Islamicjerusalem Studies.

Chapter 3

Latest Progressive Research on Islamicjerusalem Studies

Through the Institute and the University of Abertay Dundee and later the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, the author has developed unique teaching and research programmes, based on current and progressive research, which take into consideration the needs and preferences of the local, national and international students, so that they can appreciate and understand the various schools of thought within a specific line of study. This has produced a new generation of young scholars with Master's and PhD degrees in Islamicjerusalem Studies, students who hopefully now have a thorough grounding in the new field. We have to date a community of 48 graduates in Islamicjerusalem Studies working across the globe at several levels: 12 PhDs, 33 Master's and three PG Diplomas/PG Certificates. In addition, these programmes have trained qualified postgraduate students and created a team of young scholars in a variety of disciplines in Islamicjerusalem Studies. These students have also conducted high quality research both at taught Master's or PhD levels.

Moreover, through his teachings and supervisory role, the author has inspired and encouraged his postgraduate students to research into this new branch of human knowledge of Islamicjerusalem, its central frame of reference, vital nature, uniqueness, and various other aspects and dimensions. Many of his discussions and arguments have been studied seriously by his postgraduate students and developed into essays, dissertations, theses and books, all of which have made vital contributions to the knowledge of Islamicjerusalem Studies.

Below is a list of some of the latest progressive research on Islamicjerusalem Studies:

1. Othman Ismael al-Tel wrote his PhD thesis (2002) on *The first Islamic conquest of Aelia (Islamic Jerusalem): A critical analytical study of the early Islamic historical narrations and sources* (July 2003).
2. Haithem Fathi Al-Ratrout wrote his PhD thesis (2002) on *The architectural development of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem in the early Islamic period: Sacred architecture in the shape of the 'Holy'*.
3. Maher Younes Abu-Munshar wrote his PhD thesis (2003) on *A historical study of Muslim treatment of Christians in Islamic Jerusalem at the time of Umar Ibn al-Khattab and Salah al-Din with special reference to the Islamic values of justice* (Nov 2003).
4. Mohammad Roslan Mohammad Nor wrote his PhD thesis (2005) on *The significance of Islamicjerusalem in Islam: Qur'anic and Hadith perspectives* (Dec 2005).
5. Aminurraasyid Yatiban wrote his Master's dissertation (2003) on *The Islamic concept of sovereignty: Islamic Jerusalem during the first Islamic conquest as a case study*. He also wrote his PhD thesis (2006) on *Muslim understandings of the concept of Al-Siyada (sovereignty): An analytical study of Islamicjerusalem from the first Muslim conquest until the end of the first Abasid period (16-264AH/637-877CE)* (April 2006).
6. Ra'id Jabareen wrote his PhD thesis (2006) on *Muslim juristic rulings of Islamicjerusalem with special reference to Ibadat in Al-Aqsa Mosque: A critical comparative study* (April 2006).
7. Khalid Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi wrote his Master's dissertation (2003) on *Mapping Islamicjerusalem: Geographical boundaries of Islamicjerusalem*. He also wrote his PhD thesis (2006) on

Mapping Islamicjerusalem: The geographical extent of the land of Bayt al-Maqdis, the Holy Land and the Land of Barakah (Aug 2006).

8. Abdallah Ma'rouf Omar wrote his Master's dissertation (2005) on *Towards the conquest of Islamicjerusalem: The three main practical steps taken by Prophet Muhammad – Analytical study*. He also wrote his PhD thesis (2008) on *The preparation and strategic plan of the prophet Muhammad for Islamicjerusalem: A critical study of Muslim sources* (September 2008).
9. Nour Abu-Asab wrote her Master's dissertation (2009) on *Muslim's Attitude towards Christian Holy Sites in Islamicjerusalem from 636CE until 969 CE*. She also wrote her PhD thesis (2014) on *The Umayyad and Fatimid Attitude towards Christian Sacred Sites in Palestine with Special Reference to 'AbdAl-Malik Ibn Marwan and Al-Hakim Biamrillah*.
10. Fatimatuazzahra' Abd Rahman wrote her Master's dissertation (2004) on *Political, social and religious changes in Islamicjerusalem from the first Islamic conquest until the end of Umayyad period (637 to 750CE): An analytical study*. She is now writing her PhD thesis on *The Muslim concept of change: An analytical study of the political, social and economic changes in Islamicjerusalem from the first Muslim conquest till the end of the Fatimid period (637-1099 CE)*.
11. Aisha Muhammad Ibrahim Al-Ahlas wrote her Master's dissertation (2003) on *Islamic Research Academy (ISRA) 1994-2003: Background, activities and achievements with special reference to the new field of inquiry of Islamic Jerusalem Studies*.
12. Sarah Mohamed Sherif Abdel-Aziz Hassan wrote her Master's dissertation (2005) on *Women: Active agents in Islamising³ Islamicjerusalem from the Prophet's time until the end of the Umayyad period*.

13. Ramona Ahmed Ibrahim wrote her Master's dissertation (2005) on *Islamicjerusalem as a model of conflict resolution: A case study of the negotiations between Salah al-Din and Richard the Lionheart (1191 – 1192 CE)*.
14. Mahmoud Mataz Kazmouz wrote his Master's dissertation (2006) on *The Ottoman implementation of the vision of Islamicjerusalem as a model for multiculturalism with a special reference to Sultan Suleiman I, the Magnificent (1520 – 1566)*.
15. Fadi Al-Rabi wrote his Master's dissertation (2007) on *Islamicjerusalem: the First Qiblah*.
16. Dina Al-Askari wrote her Master's dissertation (2008) on *The Inclusivity of Islamicjerusalem: A Qur'anic perspective*.
17. Sara Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi wrote her Master's dissertation (2010) on *Towards a Geopolitical Understanding of Islamicjerusalem during the Ayyubids: A critical study of three cases*.

The latest research of Sara El-Awaisi in 2010 is one example of the current and progressive research in the field. If the re-discovery of the geographical boundaries of Islamicjerusalem has helped to clarify several contradicting historical events and resolved a number of problematic historical issues, Sara El-Awaisi's dissertation is another significant contribution to knowledge. It is also an important new addition to the field of Islamicjerusalem Studies which strengthens the current contribution to international relations discourse within the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches of the field. Indeed, she is the first young promising scholar in the field to study geopolitical theories so as to understand historical events.

Chapter 4

Latest Development in Islamicjerusalem Studies - A New Strategic Plan 2007-2017

In 2007, the Academy for Islamicjerusalem Studies (ISRA) developed a new strategic plan to expand, “transfer” and promote the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies to the Arab and Muslim countries. Implementing this new strategic plan became one of the author’s priorities. To implement this strategic plan, the author decided to move out from the higher education environment in the West and return to Asia. One of the main aims of this move was to promote and expand Islamicjerusalem Studies to Asian and African countries.

He first moved in August 2007 to Sana’a in Yemen where he successfully established, for the University of Science and Technology, the “Humanities and Social Sciences Research Centre”. As an initial step, he organised in Sana’a in November 2007, the first international academic conference in West Asia which led to the Sana’a Declaration for Islamicjerusalem Studies. In August 2008, he moved again to Syria where he successfully helped in the development of the Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy at the University of Kalamoon. However, the serious developments in Syria which started in March 2011 as part of the first cycle of the Arab Freedom/ Awakening movement, which initiated in Tunisia in January 2011, left no room (at least for the present) to develop the field in Syria. So, in June 2011, he again decided to move, this time to Southeast Asia. He moved in July 2011 to Malaysia as a Visiting Consultant at

the University of Malaya (UM); and is now a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). In October 2012, he moved to Turkey as a Professor at the Alliance of Civilizations Institute - Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif Universitesi; then a Professor of International Relations at Istanbul Sabahttin Zaim University; and now Professor of International Relations at the **Social Sciences University of Ankara**.

To implement ISRA's new strategic plan of 2007, ISRA decided in December 2011 to focus its efforts on finding homes for Islamicjersalem Studies in key regions by establishing a basis/partnership in three hubs from which the field could be promoted: West Asia, with possibly Turkey as a base; North Africa, with possibly Egypt as a base; and Southeast Asia, with possibly Malaysia as a base. As the leading actor in promoting the field of Islamicjersalem Studies to the Arab and Muslim world, ISRA is working very closely with universities/institutions/organisations/societies/individuals to facilitate the required means to successfully accomplish the establishment of these three hubs. However, each of these hubs would develop the field within its respective key regions according to its own circumstances and needs.

To justify establishing a hub in Malaysia, for example, one could argue that ISRA has since 2001 a long and fruitful relationship with a number of institutions in Malaysia. For example, ISRA has invested very heavily in Malaysian young academics. It granted full scholarships to four PhD and 12 Master's students (nearly one third of the total graduates in the field). These local Malaysian graduates are truly the core of the field's greatest assets who will take the field out into Southeast Asia. The appointments of both Dr Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor at UM in 2007 and Dr Aminurraasyid Yatiban, initially at the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) in 2011 and now (from October 2012) at UUM, are significant steps to promote this new field of inquiry to Malaysia. Dr Mohd Roslan and Dr Aminurraasyid were the first postgraduate students from Malaysia who joined the new field of inquiry of Islamicjersalem Studies in the UK. In addition, on 13 February 2008, UM's Academy for Islamic Studies launched the Malay edition/translation of the author's monograph, *Introducing*

Islamicjerusalem. In short, the plan was to find a Malaysian university where efforts could be focused on developing this field in Southeast Asia, in particular, and the Muslim world, in general.

During the official opening ceremony of the 13th International Academic Conference on Islamicjerusalem Studies (2012), “Palestine and Islamicjerusalem: Introducing Islamicjerusalem Studies to Southeast Asia” on 10 April 2012 at UUM, the University decided to establish an “Institute of Excellence for Islamicjerusalem Studies” at the UUM College of Law, Government and International Studies. This is the first research-led Institute of Excellence for Islamicjerusalem Studies established in Southeast Asia, in particular, and the Muslim World, in general. Indeed, UUM is now the second university worldwide (after the University of Aberdeen) and the first Muslim university to take a lead in this field of inquiry.

This newly established Institute which was officially launched on 18 August 2014, is playing a key role in structuring the research and teaching of Islamicjerusalem Studies at local and international levels. Indeed, this is an excellent opportunity for UUM to take a lead in a niche research area, as well as become a model of cross-disciplinary research. Being a young field of inquiry and still developing, it has great potential in many areas that still need to be studied. Moreover, this is providing unique research topics across many disciplines at UUM. In addition, as a unique institute across the Muslim World, it is attracting international interest and a good number of postgraduate students from the Muslim world (15 to date).

In Turkey, the plan is to find a Turkish university which can take the lead in developing this field in West Asia at the postgraduate level (Master’s and PhD). When this will be established at a Turkish university, it will be the first research-led Centre for Islamicjerusalem Studies established in West Asia; and that will be the third university worldwide (after the University of Aberdeen and UUM) and the second Muslim university to take a lead in this field of inquiry.

In addition, as part of the next 10 year-plan (2014 - 2024), it was decided that a Waqf/Endowment be established in Istanbul dedicated to academic excellence on Islamicjerusalem Studies. This

new Waqf (IslamicJerusalem Research Academy) was established in Turkey on 5 August 2015 to lead and advance all the projects of IslamicJerusalem Studies for the next decade.



Conclusion

This monograph gives the revised definitions of the new terminology of Islamicjerusalem and its field of inquiry, Islamicjerusalem Studies, which takes into consideration the more recent discussions and research in the field. One of its main conclusions is that within the English-speaking world, the term, Islamicjerusalem as one word seems to be the most appropriate term which was originally developed in the English language and represents the concept best even with its problems. However, within the non-English speaking world, the term, *Bayt al-Maqdis* (in Arabic), Baitulmaqdis (in Malay and Indonesian) and Beytülmaqdis (in Turkish) can be used.

Moreover, based on the approach of specialisation and complementation, the establishment of this field was a journey and a process, which adopted the principle of gradual establishment and development. It also went through a number of stages on the road to its establishment and development. With clear vision, passion, determination and a good team of young scholars in a variety of disciplines in Islamicjerusalem Studies, the field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies was founded and developed, together with interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. To this end, a new frame of reference on Islamicjerusalem has been established in the UK.

Through the establishment of ISRA in the UK, the founder (author) planned that research and scholarship take place to build the foundation stones of his vision for the field. In addition, by taking practical steps, he institutionalised the development, integration and promotion of the new field within academia, especially within the British higher education establishments. In addition, it is at present being taught as individual courses at undergraduate level in a number of Muslim universities, such as Malaysia and Turkey.

Finally, with the development of a new strategic plan to expand, “transfer” and promote the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies to the Arab and Muslim countries, the “Institute of Excellence

for Islamicjerusalem Studies” was established at UUM in 2012 and “Islamicjerusalem Research Academy” was established as a Waqf in Turkey in 2015. The newly established Waqf in Turkey is leading the development of all the projects of Islamicjerusalem Studies worldwide for the next decade (2014 – 2024).



End Notes

- 1 This background of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies until 2004 was based on Al-Ahlas (2004).
- 2 According to the Oxford English Dictionary, terminology means a 'set of terms relating to a subject'; term(s) mean(s) 'a word or phrase used to describe a thing or to express an idea'; concept means 'an abstract idea'; abstract means 'having to do with ideas or qualities rather than physical or concrete things'; nature means 'the typical qualities or character of a person, animal, or thing'; and vital means 'absolutely necessary'. The author is very grateful to Sarah Hassan, an MLitt postgraduate student in Islamicjerusalem Studies in 2005, for collecting these definitions from the Oxford English Dictionary.
- 3 The author strongly disagrees with the usage of this terminology, 'Islamising Islamicjerusalem', in the context of Hassan's dissertation (2005). Indeed, it goes against the recent historical findings, the historical nature of Islamicjerusalem and its vision at the time under discussion in her dissertation. After she submitted her dissertation, the author felt bound to discuss this issue with Sarah at length. He also raised the point that on examination of the dissertation, it was revealed that she did not mean 'Islamising Islamicjerusalem'. In addition, he pointed out that she used phrases, such as 'underpinning the significance of Islamicjerusalem', 'demonstrating the significance of Islamicjerusalem', 'making the significance of Islamicjerusalem' and 'developing the significance of Islamicjerusalem'. Sarah agrees that this is not the appropriate terminology to use in this context.

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About the Author

Professor Dr. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, is a renowned international Professor of International Relations, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society – UK, and Founder of the Field of Inquiry of Islamicjerusalem *Beytülmaḳdis* Studies.

He is a Muslim British Palestinian who lived in Arab, Muslim and Western countries. He has been teaching and researching for 32 years (from 1986) at Arab, British, Malaysian and Turkish universities where he is currently a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM); and a Professor of International Relations in Turkey.

Professor El-Awaisi has an excellent record of research publications in both English and Arabic. Some of his publications have been translated into French, Malay, Turkish and Indonesian languages. He encouraged and supported the developments of a number of academic knowledge-based thoughts and ideas through his supervision and examination of a good number of Master dissertations and PhD thesis at British, Malaysian and Turkish universities.

Moreover, he participated and presented academic papers at many international academic conferences. Moreover, he established a number of international academic projects from scratch, such as, the Field of Inquiry of Islamicjerusalem *Beytülmaḳdis* Studies, where he founded it in 1994; the annual International Academic Conference on Islamicjerusalem Studies, where he has been the Chair since 1997; and the academic refereed journal, Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies, where he has been the Editor-in-Chief since 1997.

One of his major achievements is his contribution to knowledge (a number of theories and models) in the field of International Relations, such as, his new geopolitical theory: the *Barakah* Circle Theory of Islamicjerusalem; and his *Aman* (Peaceful Co-Existence and Mutual Respect) Theory.

He received a number of awards, including: Stirling Council Provost's Civic Award for 1999 - UK, Special Award for Innovation in 2007 – UK; and recently "Islamic World Istanbul "Science" Award" in 2018.

In short, Professor El-Awaisi is an energetic scholar and a visionary, accomplished and innovative academic leader, who dedicated and planned his lifetime to education and knowledge as a base for human development, with a passionate and grittier commitment to progressive education, research and community welfare.

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